

'DANGEROUS PERSON' Hamilton judge sentences 38-year-old man to 15 years for fatal stabbing // A6

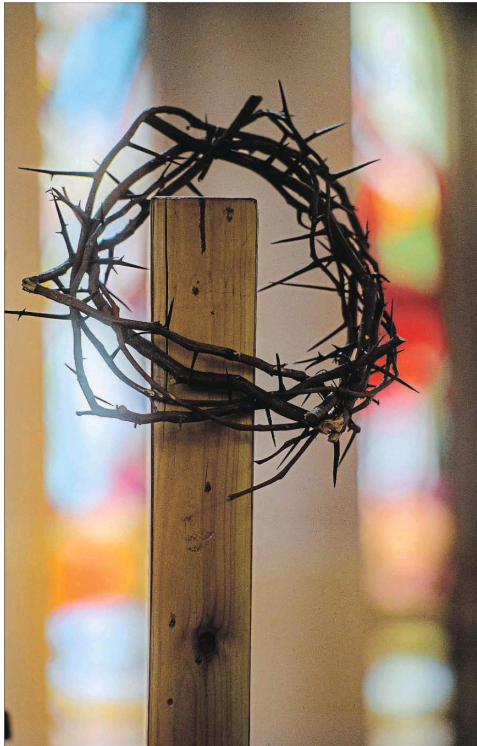
WEEKEND
MARCH 31, 2018

HAMILTON THE SPECTATOR

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"We are still awaiting Easter; we are not yet standing in the full light but walking toward it full of trust."

POPE BENEDICT XVI



A crown of thorns adorns a cross at St. Patrick's Church in downtown Hamilton ahead of Easter services this weekend.

PHOTOGRAPH BY SCOTT GARDNER, THE HAMILTON SPECTATOR

GO Regina Haggio

ART UNDER THE HAMMER
Dundas Valley School of Art auction is April 7 **G1**



CHASE AWAY MY BLUES BY MICHELLE GUTTAO IS UP FOR GRABS THIS YEAR

Never having to turn your back on your childhood dreams

Michael Walsh is one of the top artists Marvel relies upon to bring its comic book heroes to the page



GRAHAM ROCKINGHAM
The Hamilton Spectator

A COUPLE OF BLOCKS off James Street North, resides a little slice of comic book heaven. It's a modest brick bungalow, home and studio of cartoonist Michael Walsh, a born-and-bred Hamiltonian who at the age of 31 has reached the pinnacle of the comic book world. Walsh is one of a few dozen top artists that the Marvel empire relies upon to bring its stable of comic book heroes



GARY TOKOMAMA, THE HAMILTON SPECTATOR

to the printed page, each and every month.

If all goes well, his fame in the world of fantasy will reach new levels when his original creation "Come

COMICS continues // A10
Michael Walsh of Hamilton says he could draw before he could talk.

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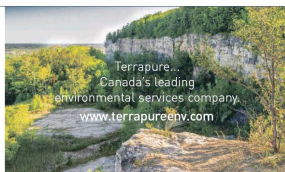
BRIDGE/CHESS F4
BUSINESS A20
CAREERS C8
CLASSIFIED C3
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WEEKEND COMICS F1

HOROSCOPES F5
LOTTERIES A2
MOVIES G4
OPINION A16
PUZZLES F2, F4, F7
SPECIAL OCCASIONS C1

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THE SPEC **Travel**



STEVE HAGGERTY / TNS

Papayas grow along the beach near Tides Reach's lodge and bungalow on Taveuni Island.

Fiji pride: Where paradise is more than sand and sea

Fijians love their country, and love to show it off to visitors

ANNE Z. COOKE
Tribune News Service

TAVENUL FIJI — If Fiji was nothing more than sand and sea, palm fronds and flowers, it wouldn't matter which South Pacific beach resort you visited.

Every vacation would be just another ho-hum adventure.

But after 15 years and as many visits to this 333-island nation, I've got a pretty good idea why each destination promises a unique experience.

What's the secret? It's the Fijians themselves, proud to be Fijian and proud to show you their country.

Sau Bay Resort, on Vanua Levu, the second largest island, was the first stop on my most recent trip to Fiji. Still jet-lagged, I was sitting on the deck of the lodge, gazing over the



Tavoro Waterfalls, in Bouma National Heritage Park, is one of Taveuni's top attractions.

bay, when the bushes below me suddenly stirred and two hands and a pair of clippers appeared, followed by a head.

Then the head looked up, saw my feet and without missing a beat asked me what I thought of the umbrella-like trees towering over the lodge.

This was my introduction to the owner, Nigel Douglas, a Scotsman by ancestry and a fifth-generation Fijian.

"These are rain trees," he said, affectionately patting a gnarled trunk. "I took one look and I knew this was the place for me. You don't often see them so close to the shore — saltwater, you know — but they're thriving. And look at these tiny white flowers. These bushes are rare, but native."

He paused, scanning the hillside. "This was bare when we bought it. Carroll and I planted everything you see."

"How did you ever find this spot?" I asked. "Coming across the bay, you can't see it."

"That's easy," he said. "Fiji is home. I've been to most of these islands, dived every reef. Anything you want to know, people, politics, gardens, just ask. Do you drink wine? Maybe later."

I'd already met Carroll, who emerged from her garden to show me Sau Bay's four oceanview bures (B.O.O.-eye, i.e. cottages), each equipped with big beds, mosquito netting, private baths, coffee makers, a cookie jar and air conditioning.

Casual but courteous, the Dougases know how to make travelers feel at home. On most mornings Carroll worked at her desk while Divemaster Nigel suited up to guide the resort's six other guests to Rainbow Reef and the Great White Wall, 10 minutes away by dive boat.

That left precious private time to kayak across the bay, hike uphill and (with assistant manager Sarah as guide) visit nearby Kiwa Island, the adopted home of Polynesian immigrants from Taveuni; rising oceans are washing away their villages.

Four days later it was time to leave Sau Bay, this time to go to Tides Reach Resort, on Taveuni, Fiji's Garden Isle.

Expecting a clerk and a check-in desk, I was welcomed like royalty as

Fiji continues // G11

Hiking the authentic Great Wall of China like a local

Millions visit the wall each year but there are spots off the beaten track to avoid the crowds

ANNA HARTLEY
The Washington Post

Tires crunch the gravel as our driver turns around and makes his way back down the narrow access road, leaving my fiancé, his mother and I alone in front of an empty building.

The air is cool and fresh, and a few white clouds move briskly across the blue sky. Beijing, with its more than 20 million inhabitants, gleaming skyscrapers and intermittent layer of smog, is a

safe 50 miles (80 kilometres) to the south. All being well, we'll see the driver again in about four hours, at our pickup location.

I check the WeChat message on my phone again.

"Behind [the building] there's a path uphill to the wall. Usually, a farmer can point you to it. Follow it up."

There are no farmers to be seen on this bright November morning, but the path is there, and the valley swallows us up in minutes.

WALL continues // G12



ANNA HARTLEY / FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

The author's mother-in-law follows the narrow path westward along the Great Wall of China at the Moya Shike Natural Scenic Area outside Beijing.

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Travel

FJI
continued from // G10

the staff — 10 handsome Fijians — lined up with heavy “bulas” and firm handshakes. “You must be thirsty,” said bartender William Cehu, eyes twinkling, big smile, handing me Fiji’s traditional welcome drink of fresh coconut water topped with a flower.

Just four years old, Tides Reach is still growing, adding two bureas and a dive shop later this year.

The bureas are sleek and simple, uncluttered white with minimalist furnishings and bold Asian and Fijian art.

The main lodge, airy and spacious with two open-air sides, looks out over a sandy beach and the bluest of blue water.

“It’s beautiful, isn’t it?” said guest relations manager Paul Gonebeci, motioning me to a plump white sofa. “Let’s sit for a minute, then I’ll show you around,” he said, handing me a list of possible activities.

“Some people don’t want to do anything but relax,” he added, nodding toward a guest on the beach, reading a book under an umbrella. “But you might want to see the waterfalls or the hiking trails, so we should pick a time you like.”

With a free afternoon ahead, Gonebeci suggested snorkeling around Honeycomb Island, at the end of the bay.

Following sports guide Niu Lebaivalu into water as clear as glass, I had my first look at the coral damaged when Cyclone Winston roared over Fiji, in February 2016.

Clumps of newly grown coral, yellow, beige and red, looked healthy.

But you couldn’t miss the piles of dead coral ripped out by wind and waves.

“It was a Category 5 storm, the worst one ever,” said Lebaivalu.

“The Pacific Ocean is warmer than it used to be.”

On my last day at Tides Reach he invited me to his village, Wiwi. A dozen small houses built in a



STEVE HAGGERTY / TNS

Sun pushes away wispy clouds above Beach Bungalow No. 1 at Tides Reach Resort on Taveuni, Fiji’s Garden Isle. Left: Inside-outside living at Sau Bay’s bureas, with front porches, air conditioning, mini-bars and coffee makers.

circle on 800 grassy acres, it’s fringed by vegetable gardens and a coconut palm grove. Fetching a suit (or pajamaed skirt) from the car, he handed it to me, blushing.

“Shorts are OK other places, but the chief is inviting us to his house to share a bowl of kava. It’s traditional,” he said.

Prepared, I’d also brought kava for the chief, a gift bought an hour earlier at the corner market.

Back at Tides Reach, a farewell dinner waited — grilled lobster with roasted garden vegetables and a green salad — served by the chef, who came to the table to wish me safe travels.

Yasawa Island Resort, in northwest Fiji, some 400 km from Taveuni Island, in the east. But it was the last stop on my itinerary, and one of Fiji’s top 10 luxury retreats. That made it worth the

two short flights it took to get there.

And it was my second visit, so I know what to expect: Total privacy among tall palms and landscaped gardens; luxurious thatched bureas that feel Fijian but offer the latest in luxury;

miles of clean white sand, sloping gently out into deep water; with ocean views to the horizon.

Less obvious but more important is that Yasawa Resort is, in its own way, both western resort and Fijian village.

Blending two cultures, it enchants and enlightens travellers and reminds the staff — maids, waiters, guides, gardeners and handymen — that they aren’t just employees, but hosts.

Why does this matter? Because Yasawa Island Resort, like most Fijian beach resorts, occupies leased land, owned and controlled by the local chief and the clan.

A warm partnership and shared traditions benefit both resort and village.

I did what I always do at Yasawa: I swam, organized a beach picnic up the coast, toured Bukama and visited the famous Blue Lagoon Caves, where you take a deep breath, swim under water through a narrow channel (guided by a strong, kindly Fijian man) and pop up in a mysterious, sunlit pool.

And each evening, as the sun set over the yardarm, I joined my fellow travellers — kindred spirits all — at my favourite poolside bar, toasting our adventure.



STEVE HAGGERTY / TNS

On Taveuni Island, Tides Reach guests are greeted with Fiji’s signature drink: fresh coconut water.



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